

almost like a plot That is, perhaps, the
smallest among
the sacrifices it exacts Any form of life
exact some*
of this, the major compensation is that it
gave them
the sort of freedom they valued Have they not
defined
personal liberty as "the practical opportunity of
exercising
our faculties and fulfilling our desires?" They
saw order,
regulation, plan, in a word, as the road to this
end for
themselves Arnold Bennett, who occurs to
the mind
as it seeks for comparable cases of loyalty to
what the
Germans call "Planmässigkeit"—that thing
for which
the English language has no word of its own
—expresses,
in an illuminating passage in his Diary, his
regret his own
planned direction was not more steady and
more strict.

*' Another example of the indisciplin of the brain
Yet I have
giadually got my brain far better under control
than that of most
people Always haunted by dissatisfaction at the
discrepancy
bet\\ een reason and conduct' No reason why
conduct should not
conform to the ideas of reason, except inefficient
control of the
brain This that I am always preaching, and with a
success of
popular mtciest, too, I cannot perfectly practise
The rough
carpentry instead of fine cabinetry The
unnecessary friction
The constant slight inattention to my own rules I
could be a
marvel to otheis and to myself if I only practised
more sincerely
Half an hour in the morning in complete
concentration on the
living-through of the day, and I should work
wonders' But
this all-important concentration is continually
interrupted—
interruptions which weaken it, sometimes
deliberately aban-
doned for matters of admittedly inferior
importance
Strange¹
One can only stick to it " *

Much in this passage, so drearily familiar to
the average
worker, striving after, and failing to achieve,
steady con-
centration, may read, to the Webbs, as
simply funny
They have worked " wonders " and do not
wonder at them
They are not a marvel to themselves, and
would not
greatly care to be a marvel to others
Immune, too,
they are to many of the distractions that
called to Arnold

¹ *Diary*, May 23rd, 1908